

Message Text

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AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
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C O N F I D E N T I A L VALLETTA 0978

USEEC

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, MT, US
SUBJECT: NATIONALIST PARTY LEADER SPEAKS ON FOREIGN POLICY

1. THE NEW NATIONALIST PARTY LEADER, FENECH ADAMI, MADE HIS FIRST MAJOR PUBLIC SPEECH AT A PARTY RALLY SATURDAY, AUGUST 27. THE SPEECH, MAINLY DEVOTED TO DOMESTIC ISSUES, INCLUDED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT ABOUT FOREIGN POLICY:

QUOTE: ON THE FUTURE OF MALTA, AFTER 1979, DR. FENECH ADAMI SAID THAT HIS PARTY AND THE SOCIALIST PARTY IN GOVERNMENT AGREED, IN PRINCIPLE, THAT AFTER THAT DATE THERE SHOULD BE NO FOREIGN MILITARY BASE AND ON SOME SORT OF GUARANTEE OF SECURITY. HE SAID THAT ON SUCH AN ISSUE OF NATIONAL IMPORTANCE
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THERE SHOULD BE NO DIVISION. HIS PARTY WISHES, IF POSSIBLE, THE TWO PARTIES TO AGREE ON FOREIGN POLICY AND TO FIND A FORMULA ACCEPTABLE TO ALL FOR THE GOOD OF THE NATION. DR. FENECH ADAMI SAID, HOWEVER, THAT THE PEOPLE WERE BEING LEFT IN THE DARK AS TO WHAT GOVERNMENT MEANT BY NEUTRALITY AND WHAT RIGHTS WOULD BE EXPECTED BY THE COUNTRIES WHO WERE READY TO GIVE THE GUARANTEE OF NEUTRALITY. DR. FENECH ADAMI SAID

THAT THE NATIONALIST PARTY WANTED TO BE CERTAIN THAT THIS SECURITY COULD REALLY BE PROVIDED AND ADDED THAT THE PARTY WAS READY TO GIVE ITS CONTRIBUTION IN THIS REGARD. UNQUOTE.

2. COMMENT: FENECH ADAMI'S STATEMENT ON FOREIGN POLICY REFLECTS A DILEMMA FACING THE OPPOSITION. WHILE AMBIVALENT THEMSELVES AS TO THE PRECISE LINES FOR MALTA'S POST-1979 POLICIES, THEY HAVE RESERVATIONS ABOUT MINTOFF'S NEUTRALITY PROPOSALS, PARTICULARLY BECAUSE OF THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE LIBYAN CONNECTION AND THEIR OWN PREFERENCE FOR SOME FORM OF SECURITY RELATIONSHIP WITH EUROPE AND THE UNITED STATES. AT THE SAME TIME THEY ARE AWARE OF THE ONGOING DIALOGUE BETWEEN MINTOFF AND THE FRENCH AND ITALIANS, SPEAKING FOR EUROPE (AND PRESUMABLY FOR THE U.S.) A DIALOGUE THAT THEY BELIEVE HAS ALREADY REACHED THE POINT OF WESTERN ACCEPTANCE IN PRINCIPLE OF MINTOFF'S NEUTRALITY PROPOSALS. AS THE OPPOSITION PARTY HOWEVER THEY ARE EXCLUDED FROM THIS DIALOGUE AND, CONSISTENT WITH MINTOFF'S STYLE, HAVE NOT BEEN BRIEFED IN ANY WAY BY THE GOVERNMENT. (INDEED MINTOFF HAS TOLD THE ITALIAN AMBASSADOR NOT IN ANY WAY TO KEEP THE OPPOSITION INFORMED, A DIRECTIVE THAT THE AMBASSADOR SAYS HE IS FINDING WAYS DISCREETLY TO IGNORE.) FENECH ADAMI'S CONCERN, WHICH HE HAS ALSO EXPRESSED TO US PRIVATELY, IS THAT HIS PARTY CANNOT PUBLICLY APPEAR DIRECTLY CRITICAL OF THE GOVERNMENT'S POLICY LEST THE DIALOGUE RESULT IN ESSENTIAL WESTERN ACCEPTANCE OF CONFIDENTIAL

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MINTOFF'S PROPOSALS, WITH THE OPPOSITION THEN FINDING ITSELF ISOLATED AND OUT ON A LIMB. HENCE FENECH ADAMI'S RELATIVELY CAUTIOUS POSITION EXPRESSED IN THE SPEECH NOTED ABOVE AND HIS APPEAL FOR PARTICIPATION IN SOME FASHION IN THE DIALOGUE -- AT LEAST TO THE POINT OF BEING INFORMED OF WHAT IS GOING ON. LAINGEN

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